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TAGS: PGOV PINR PREL PTER BL PE
SUBJECT: BOLIVIAN MEDDLING IN PERU

REF: A. LIMA 777
 1B. LIMA 680
 1C. LIMA 663
 1D. LIMA 745

Classified By: Amb. P Michael McKinley for reasons 1.4b and d.

11. (C) Summary: Bolivian President Evo Morales has launched a new round of rhetorical attacks on the Government of Peru with a call for indigenous peoples to rebel against their governments. GOP officials and other observers are concerned Morales' rhetoric is part of a broader effort to meddle in Peru's domestic affairs. One congressional contact told us Morales appeared to be taking the place of Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez in stirring up problems in Peru. Another contact reported evidence that Bolivians are seeking to recruit sympathetic candidates for municipal office in the Peruvian highlands. Our Bolivian Embassy contacts (protect) tell us the highest levels of the GOB are in direct contact with Peruvian social and opposition movements. We believe the evidence indicates a pattern of Bolivian efforts to generate and support opposition to President Garcia. End Summary.

Evo Calls for Rebellion, Criticizes GOP

12. (U) Evo Morales in late May launched a new round of rhetorical attacks on the GOP with a call for indigenous peoples to rebel against their governments. In a letter from Morales read to a gathering of 5,000 indigenous leaders in Puno, the southern Peruvian region bordering on Bolivia, Morales called "for a second and definitive independence...This is the moment in which all should know that our fight does not end, that resistance becomes rebellion and rebellion becomes revolution." The GOP saw these remarks -- which coincided with ongoing protests by Amazonian indigenous groups in which the protest leader briefly called for rebellion, ref A -- as blatant interference in Peru's domestic affairs, and publicly denounced Morales. (Note: Morales' attacks are at least partly a political reaction to the GOP's recent decision to offer asylum to several former Bolivian government ministers. Ref B. End Note.)

13. (U) Separately, Morales publicly criticized the GOP for taking Peru's maritime border dispute with Chile to International Court of Justice at The Hague, claiming the case was meant to prevent Bolivia from attaining an outlet to the sea in negotiations with Chile. "I have information that

the Peruvian government knows that it is going to lose the demand (before The Hague)...They made the demand in order to punish Bolivia. Morales went on to say that he has no problem with Peru, just with its government and president. "I have excellent relations with the Peruvian popular and social movements, with (opposition leader) Ollanta Humala." The GOP issued a formal protest to Bolivia's Ambassador in Peru on June 2.

GOP Eyes Bolivian Intervention

¶4. (C) The Foreign Ministry's Bolivia desk officer told us of his government's concern about growing signs of active Bolivian intervention in Peru's domestic affairs. He highlighted the scheduled inauguration of a large Bolivian consulate in Cusco, ostensibly meant to encourage tourists to continue their travels south. The official would not speculate on the consulate's real goals, but clearly suspected a covert agenda. He added that Bolivia's consulate in Puno is run by a member of the radical Bolivian "Ponchos Rojos" (Red Ponchos) group. "I do not think he is there to promote closer commercial ties," said the official. Another contact with close ties to Peru's social movements told Poloff the GOB has targeted its efforts to create unrest on the socially turbulent Cusco and Puno regions, and said the consulates probably form part of this effort.

Additional Reports of Bolivian Meddling

¶5. (C) A congressional staffer who led a congressional investigation into the foreign ties of so-called ALBA houses in Peru told us she believed that Morales was taking the place of Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez in stirring up problems in Peru. (Note: ALBA houses are essentially Venezuelan/Bolivian/Cuban friendship houses that proliferated in Peru in 2007-2008. Ref C. End Note.) The staffer's recently-completed investigation produced a report that highlighted an ophthalmological hospital recently established in Copacabana, Bolivia -- staffed by Cuban and Bolivian doctors -- that had provided free treatment to over 15,000 Peruvian patients as of early 2008. Although the GOB claimed the hospital would treat Bolivians or Peruvians equally, 93% of patients were in fact Peruvian. The report also discussed the possible connection between Bolivian provocateurs and violent protests in Canchis Province, Cusco in late 2008. Cusco's corruption prosecutor told the investigators that a group of Bolivians were known to have gone to Canchis "to promote, to instigate, and to create chaos" during the protests.

¶6. (C) A political leader in Puno recently reported evidence of Bolivians seeking to expand political influence in Cusco. The contact said she had attended a dinner where a Peruvian named Carlos Cusihuaman -- who had recently returned from living in Bolivia -- bragged about his efforts to recruit young people in Puno and Cusco for training in Bolivia. She did not know details of the training but believed it was primarily ideological and not paramilitary. (Note: Local press and other Embassy contacts in 2008 alleged that Peruvian radicals were attending paramilitary training in Bolivia. Ref D. End Note.) She added that a trusted contact of hers had attended a separate meeting in the Canchis province of Cusco, where Cusihuaman had offered money to support the political campaigns of sympathetic candidates for municipal office -- \$13,000 to provincial mayor candidates and \$7,000 for district mayors. (Note: Canchis Province has one provincial and seven district mayors. End Note.)

¶7. (S/NF) Our Bolivian Embassy contacts in Lima tell us the highest levels of the GOB directly reach out to local social and opposition movements. A Senior MFA official with responsibility for South America has noted that the Bolivian Ambassador practices MAS-style "peoples' diplomacy" and works to build links with Peruvian social sector representatives rather than with government officials on bilateral ties. A Bolivian diplomat (protect) told us his Foreign Minister would be making two stops in Peru that week - during transit flights - and that he would be holding meetings with local

social sector groups at the airport. Collateral reporting indicates that these transit visits are conducted regularly. President Morales himself has made a point of holding public meetings with social and opposition movements during two visits to Lima in the past two years.

Comment: Morales Better Suited than Chavez to Meddle in Highlands

¶8. (C) The disparate available evidence compellingly suggests a pattern of Bolivian efforts to generate and support opposition to President Garcia. We find it plausible that President Chavez - long seen as the region's "interferer in chief" in Peru - has outsourced to President Morales responsibility for stirring up trouble for the GOP in the Peru's highlands and elsewhere. This may be due to Morales' own Andean roots, which generate more inspiration and sympathy among Peru's indigenous than Chavez, with whom most locals have little in common. Whatever the case, it is interesting to note that the Bolivian President appears to be engaged in the very kinds of opposition activities in Peru that he accuses others of doing in Bolivia.

MCKINLEY